

THE
**FUTURE
OF
AMERICA'S
NATIONAL
PARKS**

First Annual
Centennial Strategy for

Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: BISO

Year: 2007

Vision Statement

Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area (NRRA) is truly one of the more unique units of the National Park System. Located on the Cumberland Plateau in northeast Tennessee and Southeast Kentucky the park protects a rugged 125,000 acres of water and land based resources and is within a days drive of much of the eastern United States.

The park is charged not only with protection the Big South Fork of the Cumberland River and its major tributaries, but also the multitude of flora and fauna, several of which are classified as Threatened and Endangered, which exist within these waters. Big South Fork NRRA is also tasked with interpreting the areas natural and cultural history as well as developing and maintaining a broad range of recreational activities throughout the park.

The Centennial vision for Big South Fork is multifold with the park and its partners working together to protect the quality of park waters, the diversity of flora and fauna, to expand the parks interpretive efforts into the surrounding communities and schools systems, and to continue the development of the park's recreational opportunities as defined in the 2005 General Management Plan.

The Friends of Big South Fork are working with the University of Tennessee to implement a new computer base program, " CartaVista", which will provide computer access for all types of information on the Big South Fork and its resources from geology to archeology to hiking and history.

The Interpretive Division will also work to build upon the Parks as Classroom effort begun in 2006. Staff will work with interested teachers to develop a full array of curriculum based programs which will allow students to progressively explore natural and cultural resource topics throughout their education.

Resource Management and numerous partner agencies such as the USGS Office of Surface Mining and Reclamation and Fish and Wildlife Service continue to work on protecting and improving the quality of water flowing into and through the park. As the water quality improves so will the success of subsequent work done to increase the numbers and diversity of species living in and along the parks rivers.

Park volunteers and park user groups are already stepping forward to assist in the maintenance of existing recreational facilities. Together these individuals and groups will work as volunteers along side park staff to continue the development of the parks trail system and recreational facilities defined in the General Management Plan.

Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager

Reed E. Detring

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STEWARDSHIP

☒ Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

☒ Restore native habitats by controlling invasive species and reintroducing key plant and animal species.

Big South Fork will continue to expand the use of the Southeast Exotic Plants Management Team as well as the SCA program to remove exotic plant species from the park and particularly from along the Big South Fork of the Cumberland River.

Big South Fork will continue its working partnership with the Fish and Wildlife Service and regional universities to propagate and release T&E mussel species within the parks river systems.

☒ The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

☒ Improve high-priority assets to acceptable condition, as measured by the Facility Condition Index.

Through the utilization of existing funds and appropriated funds for special projects, partnerships, volunteers and staff, resources/assets will be improved on an annual basis to allow for condition improvements to a good condition.

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ENVIRONMENT

☒ Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.

☒ Demonstrate environmental excellence through increased use of alternative energy and fuels at every park.

Demonstrate environmental excellence through increased use of alternative energy and fuels. New vehicles purchased will serve to demonstrate fuel efficiency and the use of alternate fuels.

The park will continue to work with its partners and communities to increase the awareness and use of alternate fuels.

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RECREATION

☒ Encourage collaboration among and assist park and recreation systems at every level—federal, regional, state, local—to help build an outdoor recreation network accessible to all Americans.

☒ Rehabilitate over 2,000 miles of trails within or connected to national parks, including trails accessible to those with disabilities.

Big South Fork will expand its Volunteer Program and initiate an Adopt-A-Trail program primarily with organized user groups, but also with individual volunteers. These volunteers provide invaluable assistance in maintaining and enhancing the park's trails.

The park will continue to utilize the SCA program and expand the use of a new program called Vacation Volunteers. Both groups provide invaluable assistance in maintaining and enhancing the park's trails.

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RECREATION

☒ Establish "volun-tourism" excursions to national parks for volunteers to help achieve natural and cultural resource protection goals.

☒ Increase annual volunteer hours by 100 percent, from 5.2 million hours to 10.4 million hours.

Big South Fork will continue to work with the American Hiking Society to expand the Vacation Volunteer program to ultimately entail multiple volunteer groups assisting in the maintenance of park trails.

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RECREATION

☒ Expand partnerships with schools and boys and girls associations to show how national park experiences can improve children's lives.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The park interpretive staff will continue to expand the number of programs given to local Boys and Girls clubs. As additional counties develop these clubs the park will work to include those new facilities in the program.

Big South Fork will continue to make full use of the SCA and YCC programs to expand the experiences and education of young adults and children by having them make invaluable contributions through hands on work projects in the park.

In addition to developing PaC curriculum activities, park staff will work with after school and summer school programs to provide natural and cultural resource based learning opportunities for those programs.

☒ The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

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EDUCATION

☒ Cooperate with educators to provide curriculum materials, high-quality programs, and park-based and online learning.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Continue development of the curriculum materials developed by area teachers in the 2006 PAC project. Teachers will work with park resource staff to develop additional curriculum based programs which will allow students to progressively explore park resources as they progress through the grades.

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EDUCATION

☒ Introduce young people and their families to national parks by using exciting media and technology.

☒ Increase the number of web hits through the introduction of advanced, interactive features that attract young people to national parks.

Big South Fork will continue expanding its web site to include development of "flash features", additional audio and video features and the continued integration of other advanced web features such as Google Earth.

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EDUCATION

☒ Promote life-long learning to connect generations through park experiences.

☒ Enroll an additional two million children in the Junior Ranger program.

Big South Fork NRRRA currently has high quality Junior Ranger programs for park visitors and for visitors to access from the internet. Work will continue to expand the parks Junior Ranger program to include the development of age specific work books, certificates and badges.

Once completed the program can be carried into adjacent programs such as local Boys and Girls Clubs, local schools and youth organizations.

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PROFESSIONALISM

☒ Be one of the top 10 places to work in America.

☒ Meet 100 percent of diversity recruitment goals by employing people who reflect the face of America.

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PROFESSIONALISM

☒ Promote a safety and health culture for all employees and visitors.

☒ Reduce the number of employee lost-time incidents and serious visitor injuries by 20 percent.

Big South Fork NRRRA is a large and diverse park with a wide range of terrain and a wide range of visitor uses. With a large number of park visitors involved in remote/backcountry recreational activities the provision of effective orientation and safety information is essential to a safe and enjoyable visit. A majority of the park visitors do not come through either of the parks visitor centers to receive orientation and/or safety information. The development and placement of an effective network of park bulletin boards containing general park information, park orientation and site/user specific safety information will be a significant step in reducing visitor accidents and injuries.

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